

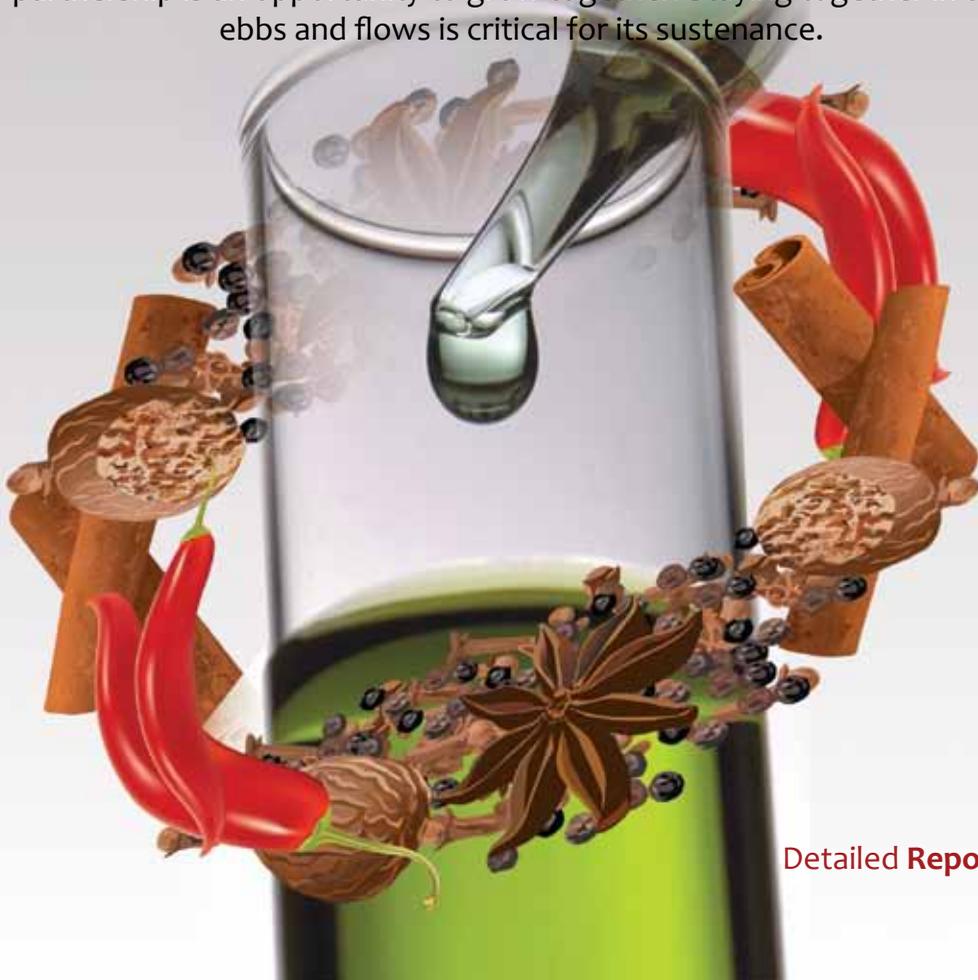
# Synthesis

INHOUSE MAGAZINE OF SYNTHITE INDUSTRIES LTD

## *Refining bonds*

The emergence of Synthite Industries Ltd as a world leader in the oleoresin industry in the last 40 years is also a reflection of the company's success in forming and nurturing long-lasting relationships. The company stands at the centre of a process which collects raw material from different corners of the planet, processes it and sells in more than 100 countries. It demands utmost care and foresight to ensure adequate supply of materials of the required quality, especially at a time when laws concerning food safety are becoming stricter. Synthite, however, is sitting pretty, having created a network of people who have been working with the company for decades.

As the company enters its 40<sup>th</sup> year, the people who form that long and strong chain remember the relationship they share with Synthite. They underscore the fact that every partnership is an opportunity to grow together. Staying together in the face of ebbs and flows is critical for its sustenance.





## Lead kindly light!

Mr C V Jacob, Chairman, cuts a cake to mark his 79<sup>th</sup> birthday on 27 September 2012. His son and Director Dr Viju Jacob and wife Mrs Aleyamma Jacob are also seen

## Vishal Menon to head NPD



Mr Vishal Menon has taken over as the Chief Development Officer (CDO) – New Product Development

Division at Synthite Industries Limited on September 10, 2012.

A post-graduate in management from ISB-Hyderabad, Mr Menon holds a post-graduate diploma in human resource management from IIMM-Pune.

Mr Menon has got 15 years of experience in the service sector, with proven expertise in building high performance organisations in world-class companies in financial services and technology products industries. He has worked with world renowned companies including ISGN, Owen Financial Solutions Private Limited, East India Hotels Pvt Ltd etc. in various capacities before joining Synthite.

In his new role as the CDO, Mr Menon will be responsible for structuring NPD and raising the division to global standards to meet our targets as envisaged in Vision 2020.

# I'm lovin' it!

S Ajith, the new Lead- Spice Division, writes about the first days at Synthite



After a five-year stint with Maruti Suzuki India Ltd, I switched gears and stepped into the food & beverages industry on March 19, 2012, and I joined as

Lead-Spice Division at Synthite Industries Ltd. The shift happened just two days after my convocation at IIM Kozhikode.

My first day at Synthite started with the induction training at the Synthite Centre for Learning and Development. We were able to cover most of the company's businesses during the interaction, which was followed by a factory tour. Together, it gave me a detailed understanding of Synthite's business. I also got a chance to have a glimpse of the Vision 2020 document, which had documented the approach with which each division was functioning. I also had a chance to meet Mr C V Jacob, the Chairman. He is a man with great charisma and vision, and his knowledge on spices and spice industry can amaze anyone, me included. It was indeed a good day, and a good way, to start with!

My second day in Spice division started off with a presentation from Mr. Rajesh Kumar M R, Head-Corporate HR and Training. I was introduced to the spice team which had

both experienced and fresh employees. I went to the production floor where I saw the huge spice mills for the first time. I realized that the huge and efficient machines and the shop floor employees are the strength of the Spice division.

The experience that I gained in Maruti Suzuki was beneficial in handling managerial responsibilities and real time projects. My position at the six-year-old Spice division demanded me to handle sales and purchase of spice products, which was totally different from what I handled in Maruti. The marketing team briefed me about our work in domestic as well as international markets. I also met up with the highly experienced purchase team.

During my first month in the job, I visited important spice markets from where we procure seed spices. I met with suppliers and traders from whom we source the material. I also witnessed the auctioning at the markets where the farmers bring the materials directly from the farms. I found the auction process transparent, fast and efficient; it helps the farmer to get an ideal price. It really helped me to get a grip of the business.

I have already started interacting with our clients in India and abroad, and am working towards expanding my knowledge base on spice markets worldwide. I have taken charge of the

operation function as well at Spice Division which is quite challenging and I'm lovin' it! I look forward to working with my fellow Synthitians in the days to come.

I must say the guidance of Mr Aju Jacob was the most important factor for me to join the Spice Division. He is a good mentor and a good boss; he was instrumental in instilling in me the confidence to handle the current position and portfolio which was totally new for me.

*(Mr. Ajith is an alumnus of IIT Bombay and IIM Kozhikode. Before joining Synthite, he worked with Bharat Gears, Maruti Suzuki India and Escorts)*

**Big change is not new to Synthite. Whether it is the implementation of SAP or the roll-out of job-banding, the company walked a lot ahead of its peers in the State. And proved that if introduced with due caution, it can absorb new things and improve performance.**

**Synthite is now embarking on a boundary-less profitable journey, by initiating the TPM process. It seeks to tighten the loose ends and ensure that the efforts of people at all levels are focused on achieving the grand vision the company has set for itself. It is another challenge which calls for united efforts, writes NINAN PHILIP**

## Change beckons



*There is no short cut to anywhere worth going- Beverly Sills*

The expression 'offer products that satisfy customer requirements' is not just a popular catch phrase in ISO quality policy statements, but is the key for survival of progressive organisations today. Quality Management has become integral in achieving stable growth.

However, despite the availability of wide ranging quality tools like TPM, Lean Production and Six-Sigma, implementation of quality management is not easy. But Synthite management, as part of its Vision 2020 programme, has recognised the need to implement vari-

ous business excellence models, TPM being the first in the long journey of achieving world class operational excellence.

TPM strategy has been recognised as the single most important concept in Japanese operational management and the key to its competitive excellence. TPM is a war on waste and seeks to optimise business processes through systematic continuous improvements involving everyone – top management, middle managers and workmen – all those who are part of the working environment and eventually extending to our vendors and suppliers. This is the meaning of Total in TPM – Total Productive Maintenance.

TPM is synonymous with cultural change in the organisation and the way we find solutions to problems. It seeks to implement a participative management style, as against an 'I say – you do, you tell – I do'

style of management. The average Kaizen (small improvement suggestion) per worker per month is 9 in a TPM implemented company in Japan!

A factory-wide mindset change is required to achieve such excellence, and one has to constantly think whether there is a better way of doing things, challenge and better benchmarks for customer satisfaction, employee satisfaction, productivity, product specs etc. One has to break out of one's functional silos and contribute to cross-functional solutions for meeting organisational goals. It is not difficult to bring changes in technology of production fast, but the struggle to bring about a mindset change, to implement the best practices, is the real challenge ahead.

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*The writer is the Director for Quality and Process Improvement*

## Partners in progress



For Mr Jagdish Patil, managing director of BD Patil & Co, the relationship with Synthite Industries Ltd is not just about selling chillies. It covers

growth, exposure to professional ways of doing business, uncompromising standards on quality and above all, a sense of prosperity for all.

“Ever since Mr C V Jacob came in his car in 1981 and made his first purchase of 30 tonnes of chilli, our relationship has strengthened,” said Mr Patil. “And he has proved himself to be not just a businessman, but someone who would wish well for all those who work with him.”

Generally, farmers don't get to know the final buyers of their produce; but in Byadgi, people remember Mr Jacob and Synthite in their prayers because of the special nature of business Synthite has pursued. “This is because Synthite is instrumental in the farmers getting more money,” said Mr Patil. It is not only through better prices; the company has introduced systems which help them improve productivity and produce more. “The company is spending a lot of money on educating farmers on the new techniques, which help them earn more,” said Mr Patil. The company is providing better facilities in schools which the children of the farmers attend. The Harihar unit is employing people from the adjacent areas, a fact that makes people more happy with the company.

Synthite, with its best business practices, also helped his company update itself, said Mr Patil. “As a supplier, I have learnt several things from Synthite,” he said. “People at Synthite are outright professionals. True, we have very strong personal bonds, but we cannot afford to make a mistake while dealing with them. What is right is right; what is wrong remains wrong.” Mr Patil says he set up a qual-

ity control lab, the first for a supplier in India, at the instance of Synthite. He also got exposed to the new trends such as computerisation and the use of technology from Synthite, he said. At present, his company is working on grading chillies instead of selling them as a commodity.

“I have an experience which no other businessman would have had from his client,” recalls Mr Patil. “On a visit, Mr Aju Jacob asked me what my commission was. When I told him what I was getting, he said I would get more, because my efforts were worth more. They want everyone who associates with them to grow.”

**Mr Patil set up a quality control lab, the first for a supplier in India, at the instance of Synthite. He also owes his exposure to newer technologies to the company**

The business has galloped ever since - from 30 tonnes in 1981 to 500 tonnes in 1985 and to 2000 tonnes in 1999. Mr Patil said, he holds the record for a supplier giving the largest number of chilli bags in one day to a buyer: “We gave Synthite 36,000 bags of chilli, which means 1,500 tonnes, in a single day in 1985.”

And the business with Synthite helped not just the people: the profile of their small town has also become big in the process. “Teams from countries such as Germany, Japan, China and Korea visit us every year,” said Mr Patil. “And because of these visits, we could pressure the government to ensure the cleanliness of the market place. Today, the entire area where the market functions has been concretised, and kept in a clean, hygienic way.”

“I would like to greet all people at Synthite not only on behalf of my company, but also for all the people of Byadgi,” Mr Patil said.

## A hand that helps



One person Mr Hamza Haji, hill produce merchant in Iritty in Kannur district, remembered specially while

he was performing the holy Haj last year was Mr C V Jacob, chairman of Synthite Industries Ltd. “He is not just a businessman,” Haji said. “He is a mentor, too.” Haji had started his association with Synthite Industries in 1991. He, however, suffered a big fall three years later as “I went after some wildcat scheme. I started afresh with an advance Jacob sir extended to me,” Haji remembered.

Haji got in touch with Synthite through a commission agent in the beginning, and later started supplying spices such as pepper, ginger and turmeric directly to the company. “There cannot be a compromise in quality when we supply to Synthite,” Haji said. “Oil, colour...they all must match the specifications.” Haji collects the materials from the northern districts of Kerala as well as from Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. “Now I supply a big quantity to Synthite and we have a very strong relationship,” he said.

After the association with Synthite started, Haji saw his business also improving. “Today we have grown from where we started and supply big quantities to several companies.”

The business goes as usual, said Haji, but the relationship has grown beyond that. “Jacob sir has been a good mentor as well. Even now, he would give me an advance, which helps me take up the procurement process smoothly,” he said.

“Synthite and its people are some of the best people I have been lucky to associate with. They are one unavoid-

**There cannot be a compromise in quality when we supply to Synthite, says Hamza Haji**



From the  
Chairman's desk  
**Growing together**

The role of quality raw material is very important in the food processing industry. We had realised this from the beginning, and were very careful in sourcing the material. One of the reasons for our success is that we were able to identify people who are willing to work with us in meeting the quality parameters of the raw

able part in our lives. We have an extremely good relationship with them all," he said.

### Beyond business

Mr Inshaf Ahmed, director of Ishana Spice Exports in Colombo, Sri Lanka, is not worried about Synthite Industries Limited opening its own office in the island nation for procurement of raw materials. "The future of our business will depend upon the requirements of Synthite, but our personal relationship will continue to be strong. It will be independent of the volume of spices we export to them," Mr Ahmed, who looks after exports, said.

Ishana Spice has a 16-year long association with Synthite which it cher-

**Our relationship is independent of the volume of spices we export to them, says Mr Inshaf Ahmed**

ishes. "We used to supply 80 to 90 per cent of pepper they imported from Sri Lanka, especially of certain premium quality. Occasionally we also supply other spices such as nutmeg, cinnamon and clove. The size is not huge if you consider the volume; it was about the raw material of certain standards that Synthite insists on," he said. Now, the volume of exports has come down as the company has started procuring spices directly. "We have excellent re-

materials.

We used to make products as per the demands of the customer. The specifications for the products would cover a lot of areas such as colour, pungency etc. We would identify the areas in which the best quality raw material is produced and then enter into contracts with people who can source them for us. In the beginning, I used to go personally to the fields and check for quality. I still remember going to Byadgi with Mr Jagdish Patil, one of our first suppliers, and making the purchase.

lationship with Mr George Paul, who used to be in touch with us. We also have very good rapport with other directors Dr Viju Jacob and Mr Aju Jacob," Mr Ahmed said.

Relationships beyond business!

### Client, forever



Mr A P Ganesh of Sundaram and Co hails from a family which has been in the chilly business for the past 100 years and was a sup-

plier to Synthite since 1995 from Warangal. After a partition in the family in 1998, he was asked to take care of the Khammam branch as there was nobody from the family there. "My cousins were my biggest competitors in Khammam," Mr Ganesh recalled. "My being new, and them being established there, I was finding the going tough. At this point, Synthite helped me out by buying teja (a fine variety of Guntur chilli)."

As Synthite paid a premium, the cultivation of teja picked up in the region: from a meager 1000 tonnes in 2000, the production has leapfrogged to 1.2 lakh tonnes today. "Slowly, other oleoresin buyers have also started buying teja," Mr Ganesh said.

"For the past 15 years, I have been the largest buyer of chilli in Khammam, and my business has had a phenomenal growth, all thanks to Synthite," he said. "Synthite being the

We have very strong bonds with the suppliers who are working for us in different parts of the world. We consider them partners in our business. Our relationship with most of them goes beyond the requirements of business. From the beginning, I have given the message that we are out there to make money not only for ourselves. We want everyone, starting from the farmer to the supplier to the customer, to benefit from our business. And it has paid off. I thank them all for their commitment, hard work and efficiency.

best paymaster in the business, I have been able to maintain a good payment record."

The relationship with Synthite has been extremely smooth, he said, adding, "There has never been a hitch on anything. They give respect and take respect. Synthite is a company a business would like to have as a client forever."

Mr Ganesh said the expansion plans of Synthite in India, China and several other parts of the world augur well for his business also. "I am sure that as Synthite grows, I too will get opportunity to grow with it," he said.

A family concern of Mr Ganesh runs a small oleoresin plant but that has not deterred Synthite from doing business with him. "That is their nature: grow and let others grow," he averred.

Synthite is closely following the trends in the food ingredients industry, especially with respect to the tightening of food safety norms. And the vendors do not want to lag. "I have also started supplying raw materials as per IPM (integrated pest management) standards. This is going to be the future and I hope to do better in the coming years," Mr Ganesh said.

**They give respect and take respect, says Mr A P Ganesh. "I am sure that as Synthite grows, I too will get an opportunity to grow with them"**

# Teachers' day out



*Resource persons from Makkala Jagruti conduct the training programme for teachers at Kandukur village in Prakasham district-AP*

**The CVJ Foundation  
has tied up with  
Makkala Jagruti, a  
Bangalore-based  
non-governmental  
organisation, for  
imparting life skills to  
the students in villages**

CVJ Foundation, the corporate social responsibility arm of Synthite Industries, is undertaking several projects to benefit the communities in which it functions. They range from conducting medical camps to construction of hospitals and homes. The Foundation is now focusing on addressing some of the fundamental problems that pester farming communities. In a first step, it is now working on imparting life skills to students in villages. Village schools in India are not known for great infrastructure. Nor are they famous for imparting life skills to the students. Most of them follow an age-old curriculum using outdated teaching methodologies.

CVJ Foundation, which is stepping up its activities in Andhra Pradesh, is now trying to work with village schools to improve their standards. It has tied up with Makkala Jagruti, a Bangalore-based non-gov-

ernmental organisation and is embarking on program to train teachers in imparting life skills to the students under their care through own school teachers.

The first training program as part of the scheme was conducted at Kandukur village in Ongole, Prakasham district from September 12-14, 2012. As many as 16 teachers from 8 schools, which together have about 1236 students studying in them, attended the program.

The five resource persons from Makkala Jagruti trained the teachers in imparting simple skills in communication, reading, story-telling and sports activities. They were also given reading materials for setting up small libraries and the required sports materials in their schools.

The Foundation plans to take up the projects for more areas in the future, a Foundation spokesperson said.

# Pumping solar power



Solar panel



Getting the panel ready



Fixing the foot valve



Here's water

Farmers in Tamil Nadu are a depressed lot now: power cuts that extend up to 12 hours are eating into their hopes. In areas which depend on bore wells or irrigation water, the situation is acute; and there is no immediate signs of a respite.

Synthite Industries Ltd, which is working with the chilli farmers in the Sankarankovil and Tenkassi area of the State, is implementing a pilot project for using solar power to mitigate their woes. Farmtech, the agriculture extension wing of the company, in association with Bern University, Switzerland, is distributing solar-powered water pumps for

the farmers. This is for the first time that solar pumps are being used in India for irrigation.

Under the pilot project, five farmers have been given the complete system comprising solar panels and pumps. The total cost of a pump would be about ₹50,000. The university makes it available at ₹15,000 of which half the amount is borne by Farmtech. Each pump can irrigate up to one-and-a-half acres of land and the experiment has been successful, said Mr. Jainendran G, Lead-Farmtech. The company has already extended this project to Tamilnadu-Karnataka border also, he said.



The team that made it happen

## RAMADA ROCKS!

Ramada Resort, Kochi, has Remerged the topper in the Medallia customer satisfaction rankings in Asia Pacific region for the first time. Medallia Inc is a US-based technology-driven customer experience research company.



To add to the celebration, Mr K K Renjith and Mr D Jyothi-mani have won bronze medals in South Indian Traditional Cuisine and Vegetable Carving respectively at the SICA Culinary Competition held in Chennai. Chefs from more than 75 hotels participated in the event in various categories

### The Mexicana

Ramada Resorts has brought to Kerala the true blue Mexican culinary experience by opening 'The Mexicana'. Under the care of corporate chef Ramu Butler, who was trained in Mexico, the restaurant has the most authentic and wide range of Mexican delights including nachos, tacos, fajitas, burritos, enchiladas and quesadillas which go brilliantly with their fruity margaritas.



#### RANKER TABLE

All Asia Pacific Properties - Response Date: 04/01/12 to 08/31/12  
 Guest Segment: All Guests | Guest Segment 2: All Guests | Benchmark: Same Period

Property	*1 GX Satisfaction
1. 19398 (RAM) Resort Cochin (51)	9.20
2. 19576 (RAM) Jaipur (85)	9.06
3. 16016 (RAM) Resort Khao Lak (402)	8.97
4. 15920 (RAM) Talaan (104)	8.88
5. 15322 (RAM) Caravela Beach Resort Goa (71)	8.87
6. 26393 (RAM) Yichang, China (81)	8.86
7. 18536 (RAM) Shanghai, Wujiachang, Huangdi (75)	8.81
8. 16275 (RAM) Kalunayaka - Colombo Internat (207)	8.74
9. 15289 (RAM) Hotel And Suites Ballina Byron (126)	8.71
10. 32977 (RAM) Chongqing West, China (89)	8.67
11. 45785 (RAM) Hotel Shaoguan City Center (118)	8.65
12. 15332 (RAM) Plaza Jelu (127)	8.64
13. 23973 (RAM) Plaza Suwon (84)	8.62
14. 24454 (HGJ) Fuzhou, China (137)	8.62

# 'Family@Work'



The extended Synthite family would cherish September 1, 2012 as one of the finest days in their lives, for they got an opportunity to get to know the company and its functioning better. Organised by the HR department, the 'Family@Work' programme allowed family members of the staff to come to the plant and visit various processing facilities, and interact with the management.



Participants of the Leading Synthite-Leadership Excellence Programme held at Ramada Resort, Kochi from 16 to 18 August 2012 with facilitator Prof. Biju Varkkey, Directors Mr. George Paul and Mr Aju Jacob, Chief Operating Officer Mr Praveen Venkataramanan and Head- Corporate HR & Training Mr Rajesh Kumar M R



Mr George Paul, Director-HR and Farmtech, Synthite Industries Ltd, speaks at a panel discussion on 'Emerging Kerala', organised by the Kerala Management Association in Kochi on August 17, 2012



Participants of the Train-the-Trainer workshop held at Riviera Suites, Kochi with Director-Corporate HR Mr George Paul and Head-Corporate HR Mr Rajesh Kumar M R

## Synthite Stars

### June



Mr Paul C. Jose of Production department – Spice Division and Mr K S Santhosh Kumar of Maintenance department with Chairman Mr C V Jacob after receiving the Synthite Star for the month of June 2012 (category: Team Award-Business.)



Mr K V Girish of Production department (category: Individual Award-Business).

### July



Mr Bijoy Thomas of QA/QC Department (category: Individual Award-Business)

### August



Mr Gino P. Jacob of Production department (category: of Individual Award-Business.)

## OBITUARY



B S Rajan, Associate – Engineering; Corporate Projects & Engineering passed away on September 1 due to cardiac illness.

Rajan worked for the company for 13 years and is survived by his wife Mrs Omana Rajan and sons Ajith Rajan (student at Government Polytechnic, Palakkad) and Anuraj Rajan.

May his soul rest in peace.